

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below, in which deleted terms are shown with strikethrough and added terms are shown with underscoring. Please cancel claims 30, 31, and 34 without prejudice and without dedication or abandonment of the subject matter thereof. This claim listing replaces all previous claim listings for the application.

1-24. (canceled)

25. (Withdrawn) An electrically conductive member for electrically connecting a plurality of solid oxide fuel cells in series and/or parallel to assemble a fuel-cell stack, comprising a metal sheet having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton.

26. (Withdrawn) The electrically conductive member according to claim 25, wherein the diameter of voids in the three-dimensional porous structure is in the range of 0.30 to 0.80 mm.

27. (Withdrawn) The electrically conductive member according to claim 25, wherein the axis diameter of the skeleton is in the range of 35 to 80 μm .

28. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) The electrically conductive member according to claim 25, which comprises a resin having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton and a metal plating thereon.

29. (currently amended) A fuel-cell stack comprising a plurality of solid oxide fuel cells electrically connected in series and/or parallel through an electrically conductive member,

wherein the electrically conductive member comprises a metal sheet having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton which has been folded a plurality of times or the electrically conductive member comprises a plurality of metal sheets having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton stacked on top of each other,

wherein the axis diameter of the skeleton is in the range of 35 to 80 μ m, and

wherein the layered structure of the folded or stacked metal sheets undergo separation from the interface of the folded or stacked part of the metal sheet after baking or power generation.

30-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim [[31]] 29, wherein the electrically conductive member comprises the plurality of metal sheets having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton stacked on top of each other, and the thickness of the ~~laminated~~ stacked metal sheets is about 1.0 mm to about 6.0 mm.

33. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member comprises [[a]] the metal sheet having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton which has been folded a plurality of times.

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim [[34]] 33, wherein the thickness of the folded metal sheet is about 1.0 mm to about 6.0 mm.

36. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein each of the solid oxide fuel cells comprises at least an electrolyte, an air electrode, a fuel electrode, and an interconnector connected to the air electrode or fuel electrode and is cylindrical.

37. (Previously Presented) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, which has been subjected to baking or power generation.

38. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member is provided over substantially the whole length ~~in the axial direction~~ of each of the fuel cells in an axial direction of the fuel cell.

39. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 38, wherein in an electrically serial direction the electrically conductive member ~~in the serial direction~~ is provided over substantially the whole length ~~in the axial direction~~ of each of the fuel cells in an axial direction of the fuel cell.

40. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member ~~has been~~ is divided into a plurality parts which are provided over substantially the whole length ~~in the axial direction~~ of each of the fuel cells in an axial direction of the fuel cell.

41. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 40, wherein in an

electrically serial direction the electrically conductive member ~~in the serial direction~~ has been divided into a plurality parts which are provided over substantially the whole length ~~in the axial direction~~ of each of the fuel cells in an axial direction of the fuel cell.

42. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member is provided only on a part of each of the fuel cells.

43. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 42, wherein in an electrically serial direction the electrically conductive member ~~in the serial direction~~ is provided only on ~~[[a]]~~ said part of each of the fuel cells.

44. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member is provided only on both ends and a fuel gas feed-side of each of the fuel cells.

45. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 44, wherein in an electrically serial direction the electrically conductive member ~~in the serial direction~~ is provided only on said both ends and fuel gas feed-side of each of the fuel cells.

46. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member is provided only on both ends and a fuel gas exhaust-side of each of the fuel cells.

47. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 46, wherein in an

electrically serial direction the electrically conductive member ~~in the serial direction~~ is provided only on said both ends and fuel gas exhaust-side of each of the fuel cells.

48. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 29, wherein the electrically conductive member is provided only on both ends of each of the fuel cells.

49. (Currently Amended) The fuel-cell stack according to claim 48, wherein in an electrically parallel direction the electrically conductive member ~~in the parallel direction~~ is provided only on said both ends of each of the fuel cells.

50. (Withdrawn) A maintenance method for a fuel-cell stack comprising a plurality of solid oxide fuel cells electrically connected in series and/or parallel through an electrically conductive member, wherein the electrically conductive member comprises a metal sheet having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton, the method comprising replacing the electrically conductive member and/or the fuel cell with a new electrically conductive member and/or a new fuel cell after baking or power generation wherein the new electrically conductive member comprises a metal sheet having a three-dimensional porous structure of a continuous skeleton.

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present Preliminary Amendment-A the claims in the application are claims 25-29, 32, 33, and 35-50, of which claims 25, 29, and 50 are independent.

Allowable Subject Matter